Based upon these observations, it was hard to imagine that the area once supported the large blue and I was forced to speculate that there had perhaps been a mistaken identity.

This concluded the *arion* search and though unsuccessful, I was glad to have satisfied myself as to the current state of ex-habitats. The search was not thorough enough in the Rennes or Saumur areas and I would like to explore them in greater depth at the right season.

On the return journey I had decided to look at the large area of forest in the Compiègne area but unfortunately the last day, Sunday, July 13th was cloudy and it seemed a waste of time to even stop. I just made the ferry on time, sadder but wiser though resolved to put Brittany more thoroughly to the test next time.

My thanks are due to Mr. Nicholas Derry for supplying the background information.

Notes and Observations

A NOTE ON THE LIFE HISTORY OF PHYLLODECTA POLARIS SCHNEIDER (COL.: CHRYSOMELIDAE). – Sometime ago, my friend Dr. M. Cox told me that the larva of the montane chrysomelid *P. polaris* had never been formally described and suggested that I looked for it on its presumed food plant *Salix herbacea* L. whenever I had an opportunity. One such arose on 5.viii.1987 when climbing with members of my family on Beinn Eighe in Wester Ross, the site at which the beetle was first found in Britain (Morris, M.G. 1970 *Entomologist's mon. Mag.* **106**, 48). Near the summit, at an altitude of about 950m, there was a large patch of the *Salix* growing among the moss *Racomitrium lanuqinosum* (Hedw) Brid. We collected some of this moss mixed with *Salix*, sieved it and put the sievings in a "Winkler" extractor.

During the subsequent 48 hr, three small black chrysomelid larvae, ranging in length from 2 - 3mm appeared in the extractor. They were given fresh leaves of the *Salix* which were readily eaten. As was described by Larsson & Gigja. (1959 *The Zoology of Iceland* **3**, pt 46a Coleoptera 1 Synopsis p 185), the larvae chewed usually from the underside without penetrating the leaf and avoiding the ribs, leaving a transparent, whole or part leaf "skeleton". If a leaf was placed in the container with the upper surface downwards, the larvae ate into what was naturally the upper surface, suggesting that gravity determined which surface was chewed rather than the surface structure of the leaf.

On 15.viii.1987, one of the larvae, by then about 5mm in length, pupated. The cream coloured pupa was discovered lying on the bottom of the container. The remaining two larvae, similarly

4 – 5mm long, were promptly preserved in 70% alcohol and subsequently given to Dr. Cox who will be describing them in due course. An adult beetle emerged from the pupa after six days.

This is apparently the first time larvae of *P. polaris* have been found in Britain. The finding identifies positively *Salix herbacea* as a food plant here, confirming a suspicion from the habits of the beetle in Iceland (Larsson & Gigja, *(loc. cit.)*) and from the noted association of adults with this plant in Britain and Scandinavia.

As far as timing goes, we found on a previous occasion active adults at a similar site at the end of May (Owen, J. A. 1983 *Entomologist's mon. Mag.* **119**, 191) but no attempt was made that time to look for eggs or larvae. Larsson & Gigja *(loc. cit.)* recorded eggs found (in Iceland) on July 14th, larvae in July and August and a pupa on August 16th. Though adults in Britain are apparently active from early summer onwards, the current finding suggests that, as in Iceland, they do not oviposit until July. The very short pupal stage noted in the one example here may have been a consequence of keeping the pupa at room temperature at Epsom, Surrey where, presumably, the mean air temperature was higher than that in the natural habitat of the beetle on a Scottish mountain. However, Larrson & Gigja state that the pupal period is normally short. All the evidence suggests that the beetle overwintered as an adult.

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EUPITHECIA INTRICATA (ZETT.), (LEP.: GEOMETRIDAE) – NEW TO CHESHIRE. – We are operating a recording scheme in the county for the macrolepidoptera and I receive records from at least 30 lepidopterists from widely spaced localities. Naturally there are "doubtful" identities from time to time and many specimens are brought to me for confirmation (in various states of repair!) and it will be no surprise that a good proportion of these are "Pugs"!

In late June 1987 Alan Roberts, who records at his home in Knutsford (SJ77) and also in the National Nature Reserve at Rostherne (SJ78), brought to me a large pale brown "pug" which I did not recognise; it was still alive and a female from which eggs were readily obtained but I could not get the larvae to feed on any of the usual pug food. Sadly I did not think of trying Cypress. At this stage Mr. Roberts brought me a second specimen, obviously the same species but this time a dead male. I made a slide of the genitalia and also one of a specimen of *Eupithecia intricata millieraria* (Wnuk.) collected many years ago near Aviemore. They were clearly the same species and the fact that I have no specimens of